

REMARKS

The Office Action of March 12, 2003 has been thoroughly reviewed. Claims 48-53, 59-63, 67 and 68 have been canceled without prejudice and/or disclaimer of subject matter, as being directed to a group of claims that were not elected for prosecution (see below). Claims 58, 74 and 88 were amended in accordance with Part B of the Action.

In Part A of the Action, the Examiner indicates that the previously filed Preliminary Amendment failed to provide the location within the specification of the support for the new claims. In that regard, Applicants respectfully submit that support for each of the added claims may be found throughout the specification and figures, as well as the originally filed claims. No new matter has been added.

RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT

In Response to the Restriction Requirement set out in Part C of the application, Applicants hereby elect, without traverse, the invention of Group I, encompassed by claims 37-47, 54-59, 64-66, 69-76, 87 and 88. To that end, the claims of Group II have been canceled without prejudice and/or disclaimer of subject matter. However, since the Action indicates that the Groups I and II are related as product (Group I) and process of use (Group II), Applicants hereby reserve the right to rejoin one or more of the methods claims of Group II, as set out on Part E of the Action upon the allowance of an allowable product claim.

CONCLUSION

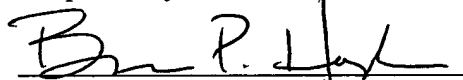
On the basis of the foregoing amendment and remarks, Applicants respectfully request consideration of the now pending claims. If there are any questions regarding this amendment and remarks, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number provided below.

If the enclosed papers are considered incomplete, the Mail Room and/or the Application Branch is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at 212-935-3000, New York, New York. A duplicate copy of this transmittal letter is enclosed herein.

The Director is authorized to charge all fees that may be due, or to credit any overpayment, to the undersigned's account, Deposit Account No. 50-0311, Ref. No. 21535-009, Customer No. 35437.

Date: May 12, 2004

Respectfully submitted,



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